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Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

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Report Highlights:

Exporters of agricultural products to Russia are confronted with several new challenges, including consolidation of authority and uneven progress in development of new regulations addressing food safety. Additional regulatory changes are expected as work on technical food safety documents continues, though during the transition period to a hoped-for more open environment, a lack of clarity and bureaucratic inertia will restrict trade. In this year's report, labeling and packaging data have been updated, and background is provided on restructuring of regulatory agencies.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

This report was prepared by the Office of Agricultural Affairs and the Agricultural Trade Office of the USDA/Foreign Agricultural Service in Moscow, Russia for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While all possible care was taken in the preparation of this report, information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped.

FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

Executive Summary

Consolidation of food safety and inspection services and the slow process of regulatory reform hurt trade with Russia. For example, the leadership of the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (VPSS), which previously regulated only animal products, has added many plant products and subproducts to its portfolio. This process has clouded procedures necessary to export. Other Russian Government entities that regulate food safety have also taken decisions not based on current scientific research to restrict foodstuff or ingredients trade. A trade ban on beef continues due to BSE, contradicting the stance of other countries that have begun to re-open their markets to US product.

In addition to this report, more specific information on regulations applied to a wider range of products, including high value foods, animal genetics, juices, and fruits and vegetables, is included in series of market briefs and product reports which can be found by searching at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/scripts/attacherep/default.asp>.

Background on Food Safety

The quality and safety for all food products produced, imported, and sold in the Russian Federation are controlled by a set of sanitary epidemiological rules and regulations entitled “Hygienic Requirements for the Safety and Nutrition of Foodstuffs” (hereinafter referred to as “SanPiN-01”). SanPiN-01 was updated and prepared by the Russian Ministry of Health and the Nutrition Institute of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences, and came into force on September 1, 2002.

SanPiN-01 governs the activities of all persons and legal entities involved in manufacturing, importing, and distributing foodstuffs, and also for those entities that provide retail and public food catering services. SanPiN-01 also establishes hygienic requirements for the substances and materials that come into contact with foodstuffs. The legal status of SanPiN-01 gives the Federal Service for Surveillance in the Sphere of Protection of Consumer Rights and Well-Being of People (Rospotrebnadzor) of the Ministry of Health and Social Development the right to withdraw from trade products that do not meet official requirements.

Other agencies have a role in regulating food safety for domestically produced products and imports. The Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Service controls meat and meat products, and has recently been given control of plant product (grains, oilseeds, and others) inspection after the State Grain Inspection Service was abolished.

For more complete information on SanPiN-01, please see GAIN Reports RS2020 and RS2022. Additional information on general food safety and policy can be obtained at www.fas.usda.gov by searching for reports on the Russian Federation under “Trade Data” and “Attaché Reports.”

Recent Developments

In addition to the consolidation and control of food safety issues mentioned above, the Russian Government, in some cases through contractors, is developing new regulations in accordance with the General Law on Technical Regulations of 2003. Regulators are attempting to move away from strict, detailed government standards to the concept of producer responsibility for food safety, similar to the HACCP concept used in the United States. However, drafting and approval of these regulations are proceeding slowly, and the adoption dates are not yet known.

Organic products, though not legally defined under Russian law, are gaining attention, and

regulations are being developed for their production and trade. The Federation Council and private interest groups have been working together to develop legislation as recently as May 2005.

Legal Basis for SanPiN-01

SanPiN-01 was developed based on the following Federal Laws of the Russian Federation:

“On sanitary epidemiological well-being of the population” (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1999, #14, Article 1650),”

“On quality and safety of foodstuffs” (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #2, Article 150),”

“On radiation safety of the population” (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 141),”

“On protection of consumers’ rights” (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 1996, #3, Article 140),

“The basic legislation of the Russian Federation on protecting citizens’ health” (News from the People’s Deputies Congress of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, 1993, #33, Article 13818),

“Decree of the Russian Federation Government of July 24, 2000 #554,”

“On approval of the Regulation of the State sanitary epidemiological service of the Russian Federation and the Regulation on the State sanitary epidemiological regulating” (Code of Laws of the Russian Federation, 2000, #31, Article 3295).”

Section II. Labeling Requirements

A. General Requirements

SanPiN-01 does not prescribe a labeling format (how required label information is presented to the consumer) for food products, but does require the provision of information about nutrition value and food safety. This requirement on nutritional value is included in SanPiN-01’s “reference” attachment, which contains comparisons with international norms and data on testing methods.

Though the specific format is not regulated, an exporter must provide Russian language labeling of each product package (such as box or bag) to sell any food product into the Russian Federation. An importer can apply labels to each package after arrival in Russia. However, this approach is less desirable, as it must be done in the customs warehouse, delaying the clearance process and increasing storage costs.

There is an exception to the mandatory package labeling requirements for small packages. The law states that if these packages are not large enough to include all required text, part of the information can be printed on a list enclosed with each unit of the product. Exporters should check with their Russian importers to make sure that labeling complies with current law.

All products sold in Russia are required to contain relevant information about the product in Russian language. It is also recommended that bulk shipments also include basic

information in Russian.

Outer containers should bear the consignee's mark and port mark and should be numbered in a way that corresponds to the packing list unless the contents can be otherwise readily identified. The contract number must be shown on the outside of containers.

Appendix III contains the list of the specific information that must be on the label.

B. Requirements Specific to Nutritional Labeling

In an attachment, SanPiN-01 lays out nutritional value requirements for 17 aggregated groups of processed meat, poultry, and dairy and fish products. Nutritional value is not determined in SanPiN-01 for grain and grain products, vegetables, fruits and products, or for sugar and confectionary products. However very detailed criteria for the nutritional value of fruit and vegetable juices are included, in part due to the public/private sector cooperation on development of standards. SanPiN-01 provides separately detailed hygiene and nutritious value requirements for baby food, food for school children, and for diet food products. Energy value parameters are excluded from labeling requirements.

C. New Labeling GOST

The Russian Federation Committee on Standards and Metrology has published voluntary food labeling standards (GOST R 51074) for Russia, while maintaining regulations regarding mandatory labeling standards (as noted in GAIN Report RS4040). These new standards were developed at a time of significant government reevaluation of voluntary and mandatory standards and how these relate to the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. While there was clearly a need to revise the existing food labeling requirements, publishing voluntary standards is confusing because the technical regulations that may become their base have not yet been drafted.

It is not yet clear if the new technical regulations will compliment or borrow from the GOST R 51074 requirements. Comments by Russian ministries involved in health, food safety, and technical regulation suggest that the final mandatory standards will be fewer and broader so as to ensure public safety with a minimum number of requirements. According to sources, most large Russian food producers and large exporters to Russia plan to implement the voluntary standards to avoid possible seizure of products due to non-compliance with government regulations.

Scope

The GOST R51074 standard applies to domestic and imported food products in consumer packaging, sold in the Russian Federation in wholesale and retail trade, supplied to restaurants, schools, child care and medical facilities, as well as to other establishments that provide direct services to consumers. The standard sets forth general requirements to consumer information on such food products.

The requirements for consumer-packaged food apply if they do not contradict the requirements of the present standard.

Section III. Packaging and Container Regulations

Packaging and containers for shipping, storing and handling food products are required to comply with the basic food safety requirements stipulated in SanPiN-01. Currently

packaging requirements for food products in Russia are regulated by 169 “GOST” (State Standards) standards for different types of packaging. According to SanPiN-01, packaging should preserve food product quality and safety through each stage of trade. For some products, such as for grains, packaging shall also meet specific phytosanitary requirements which mandate that grain and products imported into the Russian Federation in packages shall have new air-permeable packaging, per order #681 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture on September 3, 2002.

Packaging specifications are an inseparable part of every trade contract. Before the contract for food shipment is concluded, the importer should investigate and advise the exporter what the specific requirements are for each food product. Consumer packaging (for example, paper and carton boxes, plastic or polymer bags, bottles and cans) that comes into direct contact with food products should be certified. Certification for containers, pallets and other packaging that are not directly in contact with food products is not required.

Some food products are sensitive to air, water, and steam. Therefore, one of the most important requirements for packaging materials is gas, steam, water, fat, and aroma permeability. For instance, when packaging chilled meat it is necessary to maintain low steam permeability (to avoid moisture loss) together with specific gas permeability so meat color will be preserved. Material for vacuum packaging should have a minimum level of gas permeability. Goods should be securely packed, taking into account the nature of the goods, means of transport and likely climatic conditions.

The required level of sanitary and hygienic characteristics must be maintained when choosing food products packaging. Sanitary and hygienic requirements are confirmed with a sanitary certificate for the packaging material. The sanitary hygienic requirements for packaging materials include:

- The packaging material is not made up of highly toxic substances that have cumulative characteristics (carcinogenic, mutation, allergenic etc.)
- The packaging material does not change organoleptic and physiological characteristics of food products and also does not excrete harmful substances in a quantity exceeding allowances.

There are no requirements on container types for wine being brought in by bulk shipment into Russia. Alcohol or beverages could be imported in tanks and bottled in country.

Section IV. Food Additive Regulations

Basic information on food additive regulation and certification is contained in Section IX of this document.

Russia has banned food additives for which scientific studies have not been completed. For example, in January, RosPotrebNadzor banned the importation of food products into the Russian Federation that have been processed or manufactured using the preservatives E216 (propyl p-hydroxybenzoate (propyl paraban)) and E217 (sodium propyl p-hydroxybenzoate).

Section V. Pesticide and other Contaminants

Russia establishes its own Maximum Allowed Limits (MALs) for pesticides and contaminants that apply to both domestically, produced foodstuffs and imports, and publishes these in several official documents. In SanPiN-01, hygiene requirements and safety standards for

food products are broken out by numerous parameters, including a MAL for pesticides. For each group of products there are more precise requirements.

In addition, SanPiN-01 requires that the residue level of pesticides used in primary production (for example grain or vegetable production) are monitored for each processed food product that uses those raw materials as an input. The use of officially registered pesticides and their application procedures are controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture through norms published each year in the document entitled "State Catalogue of Pesticides and Agricultural Chemicals Allowed for Use on the Territory of the Russian Federation." The Catalogue is structured by chemical, and gives norms of application, time of application, and treated pests and weeds for each chemical and brand name. Chemicals not listed in the catalogue may not be used, and no residues in agricultural products are allowed.

Section VI. Other Regulations and Requirements

In SanPiN-01, changes in hygiene norms for product groups are not very significant, and in many cases, tests are unified or the number of mandatory parameters is reduced.

Plant Products:

Phytosanitary regulations for plant and plant-based food products cover all imports. The main regulations are outlined in the Federal Law on Plant Quarantine of July 15, 2000, and the Order of the Ministry of Agriculture of September 3, 2002 #681 "On Approving the Rules for Providing Plant Quarantine on Importing, Storing, Transporting, Processing and Utilizing Grain and Products Imported into the Russian Federation Territory for Use as Food, Feeds, or for Processing (GAIN Report RS2035). Further, several Ministry of Agriculture instructions, such as the "List of Quarantine Pests, Plant Diseases and Weeds which have Quarantine Importance for the Russian Federation (1998)" and "Terms of Use of Imported and Domestic Quarantine Grain and Products, and List of Enterprises (1999)", regulate trade.

The list of agricultural products that require phytosanitary certification by Russian authorities is given in GAIN Report RS5047. Amendments and additions can be included on this list through an order signed by the Federal Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance Service (VPSS) and the State Customs Service. In addition, the Customs Service can add, delete, or change tariff codes. Thus, the exporter is advised to check for updates before concluding transactions.

In fact, in July 2004, the State Customs Committee (SCC) added products and specifications to this list. The additions were approved by the Head of the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance of the Russian Federation (Letter of the SCC, of June 22, 2004, # 07-61/22835). By these amendments, imports of processed soybean products, feeds, including granulated and pelleted, wood products, and others will be more cumbersome, as phytosanitary certificates are now required.

Russia's tariff codes and descriptions for these products can be found at the following web address: <http://npa-gov.garweb.ru:8080/public/default.asp?no=12024984#8>

Section VII. Other Specific Standards

Standards and regulations for biotechnology have important trade effects in Russia. A complete description of the regulatory environment can be found in GAIN Report RS5054 *Annual Agricultural Biotechnology Report*.

Section VIII. Copyright and Trademark Laws

In December 2002, President Putin signed extensive amendments to the Russian Federation's Law on Trademarks, Service Marks and Labeling of Origin of Goods. According to statements made at that time, the amendments are designed to accelerate Russia's integration into the global economy and its admission to the WTO. The Law is said to ensure better protection of well-known trademarks, broadly defines "counterfeit" for the first time, and also provides for physical destruction of seized counterfeit goods. The law also implements mechanisms to counter bad faith registrations of Intellectual Property (IP) objects and trademark infringements.

Section IX. Import Procedures

Russia's Meat and Poultry Import Procedures

The process for importing meat or meat products involves two main steps: (1) Safety, Phytosanitary, and Veterinary Clearance; and (2) Customs Clearance.

Exporters should confirm the exact import requirements for individual products prior to shipment. Also, there may be specific import requirements for certain products that are not addressed within this report. All documents must be submitted in the Russian language.

After obtaining a quota volume, the importer gets permission from veterinary authorities at the local, regional, and central levels. Typically, the importer presents a letter to local veterinary authorities requesting to import meat. Local veterinarians forward this request to central veterinary authorities in Moscow who issue notification/permission to border veterinary authorities (this process takes about one week). The permission sent to border veterinary authorities indicates specific volumes and origin of meat that the importer will be allowed bring into the country. Although this process is automatic, the importer has to go through it annually, or each time there is a plan to increase the meat import allotment, or change the type of meat.

When a shipment arrives, the importer must present to customs documentation from the bank showing that money has been deposited for duties and taxes, according to value of the shipment. In order to get bank documentation for customs release of the meat, the importer must present business registration, a contract with the supplier, and veterinary documentation that permission to import meat has been granted. With each shipment, the importer must present each of the following to border veterinary authorities in order to get an internal veterinary certificate that customs authorities will then accept and allow to clear the customs point:

1. Delivery Contract, Bills of Lading, Invoice, Packing List, and Customs Declaration. These documents include the following information: a contract between buyer and supplier indicating the origin, volume, arrival date, and value of shipment; location where each shipment will be stored; location of processing plant or wholesaler to receive the shipment; packing list; cargo plan indicating how vessel is loaded (on pallets, etc.); and an export declaration that indicates to Customs the value of the cargo
2. Veterinary Certificates
3. Hygiene Certificate
4. Safety Certificate
5. Certification of Conformity
6. Certificate of Origin

Section 1. Shipping Documents. These are the normal shipping documents that would be required of any importing country. In addition to the information necessary above, it should contain the following information:

- The country and address of the producer (The company name may be in Latin letters)
- The weight and volume of the product
- A list of the main ingredients, including food additives
- Nutritional information
- Storage conditions for products that have a limited storage life or that require special storage conditions
- The length of storage possible (this should include the date of production and the use-by date)
- Method of preparation
- Recommendations for use
- Conditions for use, including avoidance during certain types of illness

Section 2: Veterinary Certificates: USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issues veterinary certificates for exports of U.S. meat and meat products. The FSIS document will state that the product meets Russian veterinary requirements. In the case of pork and poultry meat, the FSIS document will also state that the product comes from a facility that is authorized to export to Russia.

The importer must also go through the process mentioned above in order to obtain veterinary import permission from the VPSS. If the importer is importing meat products under the tariff codes 0201, 0202, or 2003, additional steps are required. The importer must hold a special license, obtained from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, that allows for a specific volume of imports during the calendar year. Without this license, the importer must pay an out-of-quota duty for beef and pork.

Section 3: The Hygiene Certificate. This document is issued by the local department of the State Committee on Sanitation and Epidemic Control (Goskomsanepidemnadzor). It takes 3-5 days and 3-4 kg of product for the testing required to obtain this document. The Hygiene Certificate is the only Russian certificate that could be issued for the entire contract, rather than for each consignment of the product. A Manufacturer's Certificate of Quality is necessary to receive the Hygiene Certificate for the contract.

This is required for all food products, additives, and preservatives. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the certificates for children's foods, food additives, non-traditional forms of unprocessed food, as well as food products purchased under international agreements. Goskomsanepidemnadzor issues the Hygiene (Sanitary) Certificates through its Moscow certification laboratories and is also responsible for all other sanitary and hygiene regulations. This committee also works closely with the Institute of Nutrition, which operates under the supervision of the Russian Federation's Academy of Medical Sciences. The Hygiene Certificate can also be handled through U.S. testing centers. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc. of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing. The advantage of obtaining the Certificate of Hygiene abroad is that testing in Russia can take up to two months or more.

Section 4. The Certificate of Safety. This certificate is issued by the State Standards Committee of Russia ("GOSSTANDART "). It may take 5-7 days and about five kilograms of

samples to complete the testing. The Certificate of Safety is based on the Hygiene Certificate and tests of the samples made by the Center of Standardization.

Section 5: Certificate of Conformity. Full certification to standards set by GOSSTANDART is mandatory for importing any product. The most important certification needed for exporting product into Russia is the Certification of Conformity (called GOST-R). The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues the Certificate of Conformity. The testing is done by the Testing and Certification Center (Rostest), which provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

However, the Certificate of Conformity can also be issued in the United States. Enquiries about pre-certification can be made to Control Union Inspection, Inc. or to the U.S. Testing Company, Inc, of New Jersey, a subsidiary of SGS. These firms can also give further information relating to certification necessary to conform to import requirements and the costs of testing.

Section 6: Certificate of Origin: This certificate is used to determine tariffs. Certificates can be obtained from the local department of the State Sanitary Epidemiological Inspection, which also issues the Hygiene Certificate.

Tips:

All the certificates are processed at the same time so, in theory, the certification process takes 7-10 days.

It is important to be sure that all four certificates are issued for each product consignment. Officially, an amount of product is called one consignment if it satisfies the following requirements:

- it is produced at one plant or processing facility
- the month of processing is the same for the entire amount,
- it all came by one transportation unit (vessel, train, truck, etc.).

If there are several consignments of the product coming as one shipment (for example some portion of the product was produced in April, some in May), these consignments should be separately described in the Packing List and in each of the Certificates.

Russian Regulatory Bodies

Below is a list of the most important Russian regulatory agencies involved in food imports. Their contact points can be found at the end of this report.

Federal Service for Technical Regulation and Metrology of the Ministry of Industry and Energy is the national body for conducting surveillance and testing for conformity with state standards.

This Federal Service is the result of transformation of Gosstandart into two institutions as part of administrative reform. The second institution is the **Department of Technical Regulation in the Ministry of Industry and Energy**, which develops standards and technical regulations.

Federal Service for Surveillance in the Sphere of Protection of Consumer Rights and Well-Being of People (Rospotrebnadzor) is responsible for surveillance in the areas of nutrition and food safety.

Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (VPSS) is responsible for plant and animal health issues.

Certification Bodies

The Russian Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS) issues Certificates of Conformity.

The Russian Testing and Certification Center (ROSTEST) provides a full range of quality control and inspection facilities in Russia.

Specific Import Regulations: Meat and Poultry

The Russian veterinary authorities determine which meat and poultry products may be imported into Russia and the import requirements for these products, according to the disease situation.

Eligible Products

The following products are eligible for export from the United States to Russia: Poultry and poultry products, pork and pork products, and horsemeat. Processed meat products intended for export to Russia must comply with USDA standards and regulations. Pork and poultry products may only come from eligible plants. These plants are listed on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Ineligible Products

The following meat products are not eligible for export from the United States to Russia: ground red meat packaged in bulk form or in meat patties; beef and beef products; consumer-sized packages of ground poultry, and giblets; poultry products originating from birds grown in selected counties in states affected by an outbreak of laryngotracheitis or Avian Influenza, and eggs. As the list of ineligible products changes often, please contact the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), Technical Service Center, Omaha, Nebraska. Tel. (402) 221-7400 Fax (402) 418-8914 for updated information regarding disease status in restricted regions. Contact the Export Coordination Division of FSIS at tel. (202)501-6022 or by fax at (202) 501-6929 for up-to-date requirements. The latest export requirements can also be found on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/Russia.htm>

Veterinary Certificates

All meat and poultry products shipped from the United States require USDA/FSIS Form 9060-5--Export Certificate of Wholesomeness. In addition to this certificate, the following certificates are required:

Raw pork, including bacon and pork for retail sale. FSIS Form 9450-3(8/97) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Meat Exported to the Russian Federation.

Pork casings. FSIS Form 9450-6 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Pork Intestine Raw Material, Exported Into the Russia Federation.

Poultry. FSIS Form 9450-4(3/96) — Veterinary Certificate for Poultry Meat Exported to the Russian Federation.

Raw beef. FSIS Form 9450-5 (6/94) — Veterinary Certificate for Beef Meat Exported into the Russian Federation. Currently, beef exports from the United State to Russia are prohibited.

Fully cooked meat and poultry products. FSIS Form 9450-7 (7/95) — Veterinary Certificate for Prepared Meat Products Exported into the Russian Federation.

All certificates accompanying product into the Russian Federation must be signed by a FSIS veterinarian. Contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400 for guidance in completing the proper documents correctly.

Processing/Packing Plant Certification

Poultry

All establishments which process or store raw poultry intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the VPSS and included on the approved plant list for raw poultry prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Establishments are inspected at their own expense. The requirements for these establishments are outlined in "The US-Russia Criteria for Processing and Refrigeration Facilities Exporting Poultry to the Russian Federation." For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is located and updated on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Pork

All establishments which process or store raw pork intended for export to the Russian Federation must be reviewed by an official of the VPSS and included on the approved plant list for raw pork prior to being eligible to export products to Russia. Plants are inspected at their own expense. For additional information on plant inspection, copies of inspection criteria and approved plant list, please contact FSIS, Technical Service Center, Export Division (402) 221-7400. The current list of eligible plants is located and updated on the FSIS website: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OFO/export/explib.htm>

Other Meat Products

Fully cooked pork products, pork casings, and fully cooked poultry products from any federally inspected facility can be exported to the Russian Federation.

2003 Russian Meat and Poultry Import Regulations

Type of Product		USA
Pork	for processing	AP
	for retail trade	AP
Beef	Bone-in	PR
	Boneless	PR
Trimming	Beef	PR
	Pork	IN
Offal	Beef	PR

	Pork	AP
Poultry	Chicken	AP
	Turkey	AP
Ground	Beef	PR
	Pork	AP
Poultry MDM		AP
Processed meat		AL
Live animals		PR

Abbreviations:

Import prohibited - PR

Import allowed - AL

Import allowed only for processing industry – IN

Import allowed only from plants approved by Russian Veterinary Inspection – AP

Russia's Grains and Oilseed Import Procedures

Since the liquidation of the State Grain Inspection Service, a special division in the VPSS issues grain quality certificates for export and import of grain and grain products. Starting November 1, these certificates will be issued by independent commercial agencies licensed by the VPSS.

Grains and oilseeds and their products shall have an appropriate phytosanitary certificate from the exporting country, per phytosanitary regulations for imported grains and oilseeds, and their products are stipulated in the Order #681. The Russian Grain Inspection Service issues certificates for import of grain, pasta products and cereals based on conformity of these products with Russian standards.

Import Requirements and Certification for Seafood

All imports of fish and seafood products require the following certificates:

- Certificate of Origin (in English)
- Health Certificate (in English and Russian, issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service)
- Packing List (this document is especially important for mixed cargo and must include the quantity of fish and/or seafood products, plus pallets and other containers)

The following certificates are not required, but may be requested by the importer/end user:

- Certificate of Conformity/Hygiene (in Russian)
- Quality Certificate from U.S. producer

Russian officials require the **Certificate of Origin** as proof of the country of origin for all imported food products. The Certificate of Origin is also used to determine duties and tariffs.

As noted above, a **Health Certificate** issued by the U.S. Government-approved authority must accompany all imports of fish and seafood products. The Certificate confirms that the product meets all specified health and sanitary specifications. Fish products exported from the United States are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Regional NMFS offices issue health certificates for all U.S. exports of fish that meet the Russian Federation requirements. When the shipment arrives at

Russian customs, the importer must exchange the **Health Certificate** for a Russian **Veterinary Attestation**.

The **Certificate of Conformity** is issued when a product is found to conform to Russian Government Standards or "GOST". In some cases, GOST recognizes other countries' certifications. For example, if the products have already met U.S. standards, these will be compared to the Russian standards and may be judged to be sufficient. Certifications issued previously may exempt products from testing and may speed up the application procedure for the Certificate of Conformity.

For additional information on Russian import regulations and standards, please see GAIN report RS4040 *Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards* at www.fas.usda.gov under **Attaché Reports**.

Import Procedures for Selected Fruits and Vegetables

The following documents are required:

- Product Certificate issued by the relevant Russian certification entity. This document (a notarized copy is acceptable) has to be submitted to the customs office when products cross the border. To get this certificate, the importer has to provide the relevant service with the following documents (faxed copies are acceptable):
 - o Signed contract and shipping documents,
 - o Certificate of Origin,
 - o Phytosanitary Certificate from the exporter,
 - o Certificate of Quality,
 - o Import license of the importer,
 - o Certificate of Conformity

Import Documentation for Wine

The importer is required to provide the customs office with the following documents:

- Product Certificate issued by the relevant Russian certification entity. This document (a notarized copy is acceptable) has to be submitted to the customs office when wine crosses the border. To get this certificate, the importer has to provide the relevant service with the following documents (faxed copies are accepted):
 - o Contract signed between the exporter and importer,
 - o Certificate of Origin,
 - o Certificate of Quality, and
 - o Certificate of Analysis along with the wine samples (three bottles per each name).
- Import license of the importer;
- License of the customs warehouse (where wines are to be cleared);
- Excise stamps documents set; and
- Certificate of Origin, Certificate of Quality, and Certificate of Analysis.

The Russian State Plant Quarantine Service (SPQS) has been liquidated, and its control functions transferred to the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance. For this reason, further changes in phytosanitary control standards, measures, and practices are expected in the future.

Changes in Structure and Responsibilities

According to Russian officials, three international regulations form the basic framework for Russia's statutory and regulatory phytosanitary requirements:

- The International Plant Protection Convention,
- WTO agreement on SPS, and
- FAO International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

To control Russia's borders and territory, the Ministry of Agriculture has issued several regulatory documents that specify quarantine requirements for internal transport and import of agricultural product that came into force in November 2004. Information on the two principal documents approved by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2002-2003 follows:

- The List of Quarantine Pests, Plant Diseases and Weeds Which Have Quarantine Importance for the Russian Federation, and
- The Rules for Providing Plant Quarantine at Importing, Storing, Transporting, Processing and Utilizing Grain and Products Imported into the Russian Federation Territory for Use as Food, Feeds, or for Processing.

These documents are to be the basis for actual control. Adherence to these requirements will be stricter because control functions of the SPQS have been moved to the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance.

List of Quarantine Pests, Plant Diseases and Weeds, which Have Quarantine Importance for the Russian Federation

The current list of quarantine organisms was approved by then Deputy Minister of Agriculture Belan Khamchiyev on March 31, 2003, replacing the list approved in 1994. The list comprises two sections:

1. Quarantine organisms that do not exist on the territory of the Russian Federation, and
2. Quarantine organisms that have limited spread [incidence] on the territory of the Russian Federation.

Complete data can be found in GAIN Report RS5025 *Quarantine Regulations for Plant Products*.

Customs Payments

For customs clearance of imported food products, the following payments should be made to the customs office:

- 1) 0.1% of the customs cost of the product in rubles
- 2) 0.05% of the customs cost of the product in foreign currency
- 3) Customs duty
- 4) Value added tax (VAT): calculated based on the sum of customs cost of the product plus customs duty

Customs clearance is usually done by the customs office at destination. This procedure takes 2-4 days. All customs documentation should be written in Russian. Customs duties, fees, and VAT are usually paid in advance in order not to delay the clearance procedure.

Customs duties, fees and taxes depend on the type of the product and are calculated based on customs cost of the product, i.e. the cost of the product plus transportation expenses. The customs cost of the product could not be less than the "acceptable price" determined by the customs authorities.

Potential Import Problems to Avoid

Exporting products into Russia can be a daunting task for the inexperienced U.S. exporter. Even more experienced U.S. exporters encounter problems and delays due to changes in Russian import requirements or customs regulations. This is why it is always a good business practice to check with your Russian importer and other sources to make sure your shipment has all the necessary documentation prior to shipment. Some of the more common problems to avoid include incorrectly completed documents and forms; required documents and certificates missing or unavailable; price discrepancies when the invoice price is at odds with Russian customs officials' price determination; meat or poultry product shipped from a packing plant or facility not certified by Russian veterinary officials; and duties, tariffs and VAT not paid in advance, delaying the shipment. Customs duties and VAT must be paid before the product will be cleared by Russian customs authorities unless product is shipped, under seal, to a Russian, bonded, customs-approved warehouse.

Appendix I. Government Regulatory Agency Contacts

Federal Service for Technical Regulation and Metrology (former Gosstandart)
Moscow, Leninsky prospekt, 9
Tel: 011 7 (095) 230-13-20
Tel: 011 7 (095) 237-54-68, fax: 011 7 (095) 237-6231

Federal Service for Surveillance in the Sphere of Protection of Consumer Rights and Well-Being of People (Rospotrebnadzor)
Moscow, Vadkovskiy per. 18/20
Tel: 011 7 (095) 973-2748, fax. 011 7 (095) 200-0212, 258-4497
Tel: 011 7 (095) 973-2748, fax 011 7 (095) 200-0212
Tel: 011 7 (095) 973-2666, 973-1803, 973-2674, fax 011 7 (095) 258-4497
Certification Center Tel: 011 7 (095) 973-1571, 973-1976, 973-2710

Russian State Agricultural Research Institute of Control, Standardization, and Certification of Veterinary Substances
Moscow, Zvenigorodskoye Shosse 5
tel. 011 7 (095) 253-1491, 253-1472, 256-0381

Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance
Orlikov per., 1/11
107139 Moscow
Russian Federation
tel. 011 7 (095) 975-4347, fax 011 7 (095) 207-5111

Certification Agencies

All-Russian Scientific-Research Institute for Certification (VNIIS)
Moscow, Elektricheskoy per.3
Boris Krutov, Head of Section
tel. 011 7 (095) 253-3580, fax 911 7 (095) 253-3360

"Rostest - Moskva", Russian Center for Test and Certification, GOSSTANDART, RF

31, Nakhimovsky prospect, 117418, Moscow, RF
Zlatkovich Lev Arnoldovich, First Deputy General Director
tel. 011 7 (095) 129-3200, fax 011 7 (095) 124-9966

Appendix II. Other Import Specialist Contacts

Russian Federation web sites include:

Ministry of Health:

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=143

Ministry of Agriculture:

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=153

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade

http://www.government.ru/institutions/ministries/details.html?he_id=157

Appendix III. Labeling information

1. Name of the product
2. Type, grade or category of the product
3. Name, country, address of producer, packer, exporter and importer of the product
4. Weight (net and gross) or volume of the product
5. Nutritional quality of the product
6. Ingredients
7. Date of processing
8. Storage conditions
9. Shelf life of the product
10. Conformity stamp (RST) and certification code